

(b) whether the Government have sanctioned staff for operation and maintenance of the project so far;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the steps to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : (a) to (d) The Low Power TV transmitter (LPT) at Kalna is presently being run by a truncated staff sanctioned for this project and hence provides only limited hours of transmission. Full Time transmission from the LPT centre at Kalna would be started after sanction of full complement of staff for its operation and maintenance, the proposal for which is already under consideration.

Jalpaiguri-Siliguri Telephone Exchange

2589. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to bring Jalpaiguri-Siliguri area under one telephone exchange;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a).

(c) As per existing departmental norms Jalpaiguri-Siliguri areas do not fulfill the criteria for being served under one telephone exchange system.

As per National charging plan, Jalpaiguri & Siliguri are two separate LDCAs (Long Distance Charging Areas), which are further subdivided in six and three SDCAs (Short Distance Charging Areas) respectively. All the Telecom network is built on the LDCA and SDCA concept throughout the country.

Financial Assistance to Scientific Projects of Andhra Pradesh

2590. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Technology Development Board has cleared two projects for financial assistance to be set up in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details of the projects and the total assistance to be provided ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Yes, Sir;

(b) the project details including the total assistance to be provided to the two projects are tabulated below :

S.No.	Name of the Project	Name of the concern seeking Assistance	Project Cost	Loan Amount sanctioned
1.	Production of Hepatitis - B Vaccine.	M/s. Shantha Biotechnics Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad	Rs. 15 cr	Rs 3.0 cr
2.	Establishment of 10 Ton per hour Fresh Fruit Bunches Palm Oil Mill at Ashwaraopet (A.P.)	M/s. Andhra Pradesh Co-operative Oil Seeds Growers' Federation Ltd., Hyderabad	Rs. 11.6 cr	Rs. 3.4 cr

Construction of Over Bridge at Varkala

2591. SHRI. A. SAMPATH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the amount spent so far on the construction of railway over bridge at Varkala in Trivandrum district of Kerala;

(b) whether the construction work of overbridge is being delayed; and

(c) if so, the measures taken for the speedy completion of the bridge?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) There is no proposal for construction of Road Over Bridge at Varkala. However, a Road Under Bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 561 at Km. 179/13-14 on Quilon-Trivandrum section near Varkala was sanctioned during Works Programme of 1996-97. General Arrangement Drawing as well as location has been finalized and estimate sanctioned. Tenders are being called shortly.